

***Calyptridium roseum* Wats.**
rosy pussypaws
Portulacaceae (Purslane Family)

Status: State Threatened

Rank: G5S1

General Description: Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1964): An annual forb with stems that are $\frac{3}{4}$ to 3 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (2 to 8 cm) long. The plant ranges from ascending to having a portion of the stem or shoot lying close to the ground (without rooting adventitiously). The leaves are alternate and spatulate-oblongate. The basal leaves are $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (5 to 30 mm) long. The inflorescence is scorpioid-racemose (fiddle-head shaped). The two unequal sepals are suborbicular, $\frac{1}{32}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (1 to 3 mm) long, increasing in size with age, and have a thin, scarious margin. There are 2 white petals that are scarcely $\frac{1}{32}$ in. (1 mm) long. There is 1 stamen. The capsule is 6- to 10-seeded and about equals the calyx. The seeds are black, shining, and about $\frac{1}{64}$ in. ($\frac{1}{2}$ mm) broad.

Identification Tips: There is only one species of the genus *Calyptridium* in the Pacific Northwest. *Calyptridium* is most closely related to the genus *Spraguea*, of which there is also only one species in the Pacific Northwest. *Calyptridium* has 2 petals, 1 stamen, a style that is less than $\frac{1}{32}$ in. (1 mm) long, and sepals that are $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (2-4 mm) long and are thin, nongreen, dry, and membranaceous only at the margins. *Spraguea* has 4 petals, 3 stamens, a style that is well over $\frac{1}{32}$ in. (1 mm) long, and sepals that are wholly thin, nongreen, dry, and membranaceous.

Phenology: Flowers from May to June.

Range: The main range of this species is from central Oregon to central California east of the Sierra Nevada, east to Nevada, and barely reaching the Pacific Northwest at Craters of the Moon National Monument, Butte Co., Idaho. In Washington, a disjunct population of *C. roseum* is known from Benton County.

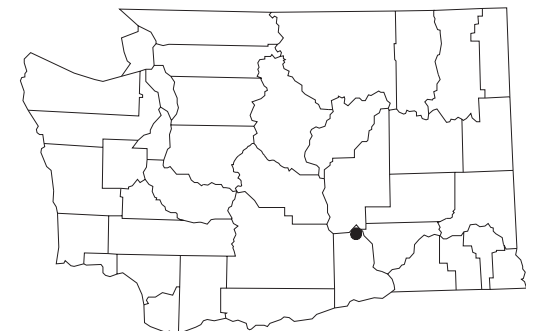
Habitat: In the Pacific Northwest, rosy pussypaws grows in sagebrush desert to arid montane forest. In Washington, this species has been found within low swales in sandy soil among big sagebrush at an elevation of 520 to 530 ft (158 to 161 m). Associated species include cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), Sandberg's bluegrass (*Poa sandbergii*), matted cryptantha (*Cryptantha circumscissa*), jagged chickweed (*Holosteum umbellatum*), spring whitlow-grass (*Draba*

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Known distribution of
Calyptridium roseum
in Washington



- Current (1980+)
- Historic (older than 1980)

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verna), Suksdorf's monkeyflower (*Mimulus suksdorfii*), microsteris (*Microsteris gracilis*), loeflingia (*Loeflingia squarrosa*), gilia (*Gilia leptomeria*), and big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*).

Ecology: Found in sandy to gravelly soils, coniferous forests, and sagebrush shrublands. In California, this species occurs on alkaline soils in moist areas and occasionally in wetlands. In Washington, *C. roseum* grows in very dry shrub steppe, but swales may create a protected and consequently moister microclimate. Plants do not occur in areas with a well-developed cryptogam layer.

State Status Comments: There are two recent occurrences, one of which had only one plant when it was observed. Populations are located within the central portion of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, and are highly vulnerable to human activity.

Inventory Needs: Dry sandy areas at varying elevations throughout Benton County should be systematically surveyed for additional populations. The two known populations should be revisited.

Threats and Management Concerns: Ground-disturbing activities, including those associated with hazardous materials cleanup, are the greatest threat to this species.

Comments: *Calyptridium roseum* is a synonym for *Cistanthe rosea* (S. Wats.) Hershkovitz (USDA 2002).

References:

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1964. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 2: Salicaceae to Saxifragaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 597 pp.

USDA, NRCS. 2002. The PLANTS Database, Version 3.5 (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.